

For Immediate Release  
July 20, 2007

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## PONDERLODGE: WHERE ARE THE FREEHOLDERS?

LOWER TWP—Today Steve Bacher and Bob Jackson, Democratic candidates for Cape May County’s Board of Chosen Freeholders, asked the following question:

Where is the Board of Chosen Freeholders when it comes to leadership on Ponderlodge?

Ponderlodge is a missed opportunity for the County to take the lead and preserve a major recreational and open space asset. In 2005, Freeholder candidates Bob Jackson and Steve Barry suggested that the County take the lead to create a comprehensive plan for protection and preservation of Ponderlodge. Two years later, what plan there is still does not meet the needs of the County or Lower Township; the facility was allowed to deteriorate, and now Lower Township can’t afford the \$1.5 million to preserve this recreational facility.

Bacher and Jackson believe that the Ponderlodge is a regional asset for all of Cape May County, and not just a local asset for Lower Township. It could be a great multi-faceted regional resource, first by preserving its vast acreage for migratory birds as they pass through, and by preserving and improving the recreational infrastructure on the site for all of the people of Cape May County.

“If we were in office,” Jackson said, “we would convene a meeting with State and Lower Township officials and propose a partnership among the State, County and Township to share responsibility at different levels and move forward. The County has failed to deliver the leadership necessary to preserve this regional, recreational resource.”